



**FEMA**

Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management  
Federal Emergency Management Agency

# Disaster News

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## **ADDITIONAL ALASKA COMMUNITIES DESIGNATED FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE**

(Anchorage) – Disaster assistance to help local governments rebuild public property damaged by the recent Bering Sea storms in Alaska has been expanded to include many southwest Alaska communities. The amended declaration also makes all Alaskan communities eligible to compete for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds.

William Lokey, Federal Coordinating Officer for FEMA said the assistance was approved following a review of information gathered by Federal and State disaster recovery officials. “Ensuring that vital community services are restored as quickly as possible is part of our continuing commitment to help Alaska achieve a full and lasting recovery,” Lokey said.

“We’re working with the local officials in these communities to collect as much information as we can on the extent of damages,” Gary Brown, the State Coordinating Officer, said. “We want to make sure the communities get the help they need to recover.”

Affected local governments and many private non-profit organizations in the Lower Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon, Kashunamiut (Chevak), and Pribilof Islands Regional Education Attendance Areas (REAA) are now eligible to apply for federal funds to pay 75 percent of the approved cost for debris removal, emergency services related to the disaster, and repairing or replacing damaged public facilities, such as roads, buildings and utilities. Already eligible for assistance are the Northwest Arctic Borough and communities within the boundaries of the Bering Straits REAA.

The funds were authorized under the major disaster declaration issued by President Bush on November 15 and made available through FEMA’s public assistance program for state and local governments.

Applicant briefings for local officials in the expanded areas will be held in the coming days.

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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